

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMENT BUDGET WORKSHOP
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 7, 2014 - DRAFT**

Page 1 of 4

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Glassman called the Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 5:30PM on Friday, March 7, 2014. The meeting was held in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices located at 933 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT. In attendance was Mary Glassman, First Selectman as well as the following Board of Selectmen members: Lisa Heavner, Nancy Haase, Cheryl Cook, Michael Paine and Sean Askham. Also in attendance were Rick Bazzano, IT Manager, Thomas Cooke, Director of Administrative Services, Chief Peter Ingvertsen, Police Department, Sean Kimball, Interim Finance Director, Hiram Peck, Planning Director, Thomas Roy, Public Works Director, Jeff Shea, Town Engineer, Gerry Toner, Recreation Director and other interested parties.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Ms. Joan Coe, 26 Whitcomb Drive, voiced her opinion regarding the high taxes in Simsbury and stated that the Town cannot be competitive with an economic development program, attracting businesses and home buyers, if we have one of the highest mill rates and taxes. Ms. Coe noted several cuts that the Town could make to lower taxes for Simsbury residents.

Mr. Robert Kalechman, 971 Hopmeadow Street, discussed a rumor he heard regarding the elimination two police officer positions. He voiced his concern regarding the production of marijuana in Simsbury and believes that this would require more police in Town. Mr. Kalechman also stated that he does not think that members of the Boards and Commissions should be paid to attend political conferences. Mr. Kalechman believes that all meetings for Boards and Commissions should be held in the evening to allow residents to attend. He also stated that the taxes in Town should be lowered and not increased.

OVERVIEW OF BUDGET

Ms. Glassman reviewed and discussed the handout with Board members which illustrated the “Wish List” of items that the members wanted to talk about further. The wish list includes:

- Budget Correction for Social Security
- Clerk for Board of Assessment Appeals
- Parks Facilities Maintenance
- P/T for Town Clerk
- Main Street full funding
- Zoning Regulations Update
- Fully fund EDC Marketing Plan at \$30k

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMENT BUDGET WORKSHOP
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 7, 2014 - DRAFT**

Page 2 of 4

- Add to Communication Specialist
- Books on Bike
- Adding Buildings and Grounds Day Custodian
- Department of Public Works professional support – Energy Management, Support Services
- Restore Library Administrative Assistant
- Salt and Road Drainage Supplies
- Leaf Collection
- MetroHartford Alliance
- Police P/T Records Clerk

Ms. Glassman stated that the Board wanted to have a discussion regarding the Board of Education funding the part-time school resource officer. She is waiting for the Superintendent of Schools to get back to her on this request.

Ms. Glassman noted that she had asked the Board of Finance to put the Board of Selectmen on their agenda for a budget update at their next meeting.

Ms. Glassman reviewed, with the Board members, what the budget would look like if the Town filled the vacant police officer position. Ms. Glassman stated that if this position were to be added back into the budget, as presented, it would bring the Town budget to an increase of 2.04%. She noted that she worked with her staff to see if there were any additional cuts that the Town could do to bring that percentage down.

Ms. Glassman and Board members discussed, with department heads, some of the cuts that could be made to bring the budget back down to 1.59% budget increase.

Ms. Glassman gave credit to the Town employees and staff regarding the re-negotiated contracts and the increases in the pension, which has reduced their line item by \$28,000. She also noted that the Town is budgeting \$78,500 in savings next year and \$158,000 savings the following year. Ms. Glassman and Mr. Cooke commented on the insurance plan design and contribution changes that have saved the Town \$600,000.

The Board members reviewed the Special Revenue Fund – Fiscal Year Comparison and the Culture, Parks and Recreation General Fund Budget Fiscal Year Comparison handouts.

REVIEW OF WISH LIST ITEMS

Ms. Glassman and Board members reviewed items listed on the Wish List, which included the coordination of a Town video to target different messages within the video, as well as other items on the list.

Mr. Glassman asked Board members if they were comfortable with the 1.98% budget, should the Board of Education fund the officer position at \$40,000. She questioned Board members if they wanted to reduce the budget to 1.5% or add back some items to bring the budget back up to 1.98% if the Board of Education funded the officer position. Ms. Glassman asked to see a potential list of these add backs from Board members. She also noted that she needs to bring the budget back to 1% and 0.5% at the request of the Board of Finance.

Mr. Toner discussed with the Board the projection revenue, with increased fees, for Simsbury Farms Golf Course and pools and some new strategies to increase this revenue.

Ms. Glassman stated that the CNR budget is part of the general fund budget and needs to be discussed at this meeting. Ms. Glassman noted that the CIP will be discussed at the Monday night meeting. The Board and department heads discussed the CNR budget items.

Board members gave their requests for the Wish List items they would like to see added to the budget. Ms. Glassman stated that they can wait to vote on the budget at the Monday night meeting and noted that the Board has settled on a 1.98% budget. Ms. Glassman reminded everyone that consideration is open on discussions with the Board of Education and the Board of Finance to offset the budget by an additional \$40,000.

RECOMMENDED 1.5% TOWN BUDGET WITH CHANGES

To be considered at next meeting on Monday.

OTHER POSSIBLE CHANGE TO RECOMMENDED BUDGET

To be considered at next meeting on Monday.

REDUCTION TO 1% BUDGET

To be considered at next meeting on Monday.

REDUCTION TO .5% BUDGET

To be considered at next meeting on Monday.

POSSIBLE ACTION/DISCUSSION INCLUDING POSSIBLE ACTION ON PREVIOUS BUDGET WORKSHOP ITEMS

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY – BOARD OF SELECTMENT BUDGET WORKSHOP
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Page 4 of 4

Ms. Glassman requested that Mr. Kimball send the list of where the items on the budget stand and it will be available on line as well.

Ms. Glassman stated that the Board of Education requested that they present the Capital Plan to the Board of Selectmen on the 24th and additional information will be sent out. Ms. Glassman also noted that some of the projects have been clarified and amended sheets will be sent to Board members.

Ms. Glassman asked that some of the trails request that the EDC requested for the “Trail Consulting Funds” for the Baker property be reviewed by the consultant also. She asked that this be added to the Capital Plan.

Ms. Heavner asked what impact the 1.98% budget increase will do to the taxes for Town residents. Ms. Glassman stated that she will ask the Board of Finance what impact the budget will have on the tax payers.

ADJOURN

Mr. Paine made a motion to adjourn the March 7, 2014 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen Budget Workshop at 8:07PM. The motion was seconded by Ms. Heavner and was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Brigham
Clerk